THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) have signed an Agreement on 25.5.2005 for ICAR ICRICAT Partnership research projects (2006-2008). The agreement covers a number of partnership projects. The broad thematic area of these projects are: Genetic resources conservation, evaluation and utilization, Enhancing crop productivity and sustainability under both favourable and dry land stress environments, Improving system productivity and livelihood for fragile and dry environment including socio-economic and policy options, and Strengthening linkage between research and development including training.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The ICAR-ICRISAT partnership projects aims for: Development, evaluation of new and diverse parental lines with build in resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses in sorghum, pearlmillet and pegionpea. Efforts will also be made for development of high yielding varieties of chickpea and groundnut with a special focus for drought tolerance disease/insect resistance traits. The exchange of breeding materials, germplasms and production of nucleus/breeder seed of improved legumes will also be taken up. For improving, the livelihood in the rain fed areas participatory approach in integrated watershed management will be taken up for increasing the productivity. The products and the technology generated with these partnership projects will facilitate enhancing the production and productivity of dry land areas.

Collaboration between Indian and US Universities on agricultural research

406.SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased' to state:

(a) whether any university or organization has entered into an agreement with any US based university or organization in the field of agricultural research;

(b) whether there is any clauses or section in those agreements which deals with the patenting rights on the results of research;

(c) the advantages Government seeks to get out of these combined research; and

(d) the details of agreement entered between Acharya NG Ranga University for Agriculture and its counterpart in US?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) ICAR has entered into an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with college of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA; College of Food and Environmental Sciences, the Ohio State University, USA and Iowa State University, Iowa, USA.

(b) The work plans/research projects whenever formulated under these agreements include patenting rights (IPR) clauses.

(c) The advantages will be development of cooperation in the fields of research and training and improvement of production techniques.

(d) Acharya NG Ranga University for Agriculture has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with 10 Universities and one Institution in the US without financial commitment on either side. The collaboration through MoU is to facilitate exchange of faculty and students, short-term training, curriculum design and education etc. and development of joint proposals and applied research in frontier areas of agriculture.

Agrarian crisis in Kerala

407.SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Central Planning Commission team had visited Kerala to study the spiraling agrarian crisis in the State driving hundreds of farmers to suicide;

(b) if so, the details and their findings and recommendations made; and